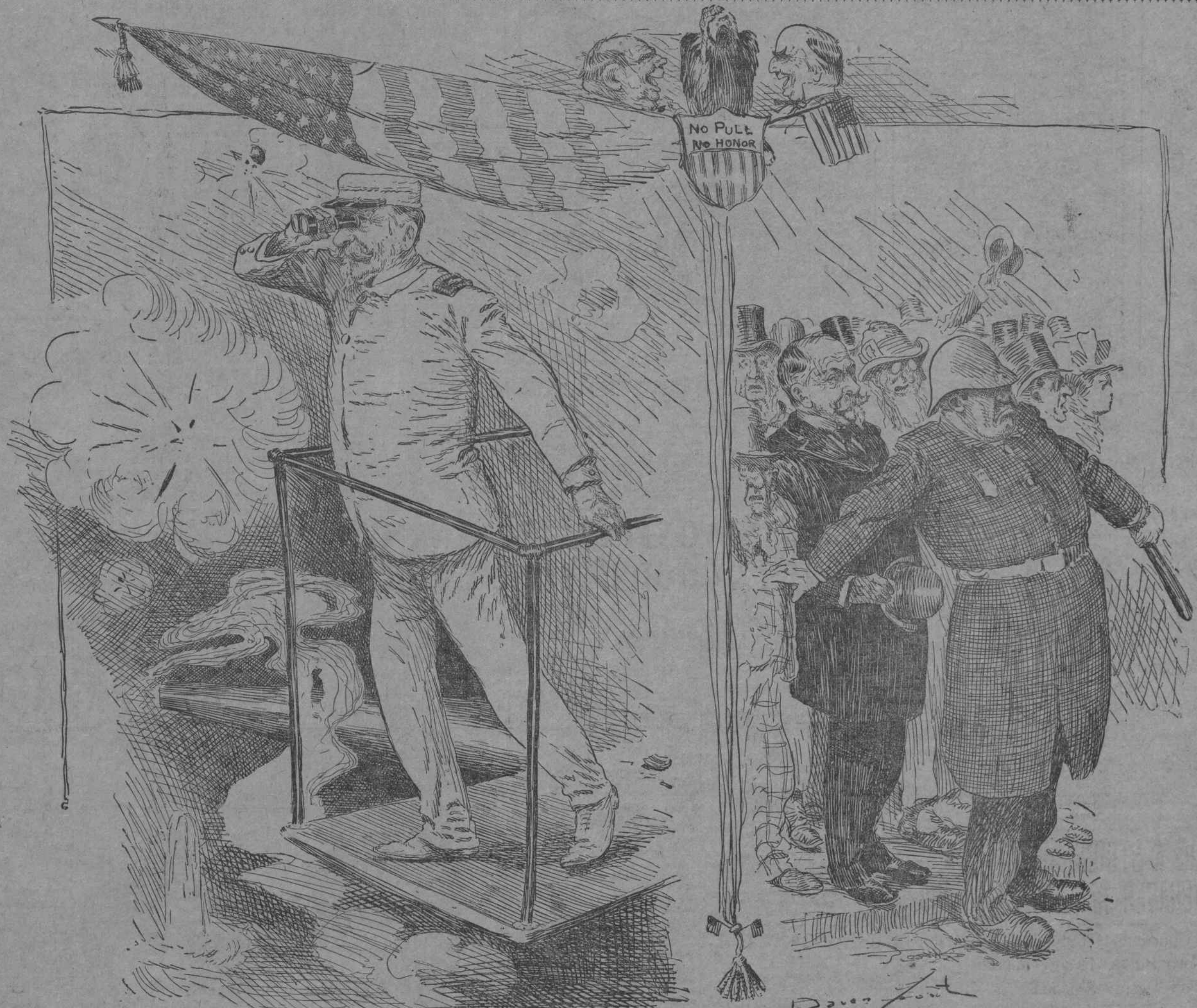


# OUR HERO SCHLEY, THE VICTIM OF NAVAL INTRIGUE, MUST OBEY THE ORDER WHICH MAKES HIM AN EXILE.

President McKinley Lends Ear to the Slanderers, and in Spite of Indignant Protests Places Schley's Well-Earned Crown of Glory on the Head of His Rival, Sampson.

By James Creelman.



BALTIMORE, Sept. 23.—The President's open support of the naval conspiracy against Admiral Schley is attracting general attention here, and the order which exiles the victor of Santiago to the South American coast is regarded by many men as an indirect insult to Maryland.

Mr. McKinley may protest that he is a friend of the gallant old hero who commanded in the decisive naval battle which ended the war with Spain, but the eloquently ugly fact remains that Admiral Sampson commands the fleet which is to receive Admiral Dewey in New York harbor—the most powerful and glorious post in the navy—while Admiral Schley is preparing for his exile.

The people of Maryland have long memories, and they do not look with indifference at this extraordinary spectacle of national injustice.

No wonder, then, that the Republican leaders of Maryland—Governor Lowndes, Senator Wellington and General Felix Agnus—went to the White House and told the President in plain speech that the people of the State, regardless of party, would resent the sinister plot which has received the seal of official approval in the assignment of Admiral Schley to the comparatively insignificant command of the South American squadron.

**Schley Is Helpless to Prevent the Injustice.**

The Admiral has been helpless. As an officer of the navy he could make no protest. The only course left open to him was to accept his assignment.

"We went to the White House," said

Governor Lowndes, "and we said to the President that the people of Maryland resented the action of the Navy Department and were convinced that there was an official movement to rob him of the honors he won at Santiago."

"We all regard Admiral Schley as the first living citizen of Maryland. Next to Admiral Dewey he is the hero of the war with Spain. His victory at Santiago ended the struggle. Maryland loves and honors him."

"And the President—what did he say?"

"He said that he knew of no official intrigue against the Admiral. He insisted that he admired him. The President declared that the Government anticipated trouble in South America, and that the squadron which Admiral Schley would command might soon have important work to do."

"Did the President say nothing about the charges which Admiral Schley's enemies whisper about Washington?"

"Well, he did say that it could not be forgotten that Admiral Schley, when ordered to blockade Santiago, sent a dispatch saying that he could not coal at sea and must go to Key West."

There you have the situation. The President whispers to a committee in the White House a charge which he does not dare to deal with openly. Mr. McKinley is the friend, the admirer of Admiral Schley, but he cannot forget that the Admiral did not consider it feasible to coal his squadron in a rough sea from a broken down and unmanageable collier.

**President's Meaning Is Far from Plain.**

What did the President mean when he said that? Did he mean that Admiral Schley was a coward and did not want to face Cervera's fleet? Did he mean that Admiral Schley was incompetent? Did he mean that the officer whose squadron smashed Spain's sea power was unfit to decide when, where and how his ships could be coaled?

Senator Wellington, too, saw the President in the interest of Admiral Schley. "I told the President," said the Senator, "that the people of Maryland believed that a conspiracy against Admiral Schley existed in the Navy Department. The Admiral is the greatest and best beloved citizen of our State."

"The President assured me that he was a friend of the Admiral, and that the South American squadron was the best possible assignment that could be given to him under the circumstances. The President denied that there was any official plot to break down Admiral Schley in the interest of Admiral Sampson."

"I said that, whether there was a conspiracy or not, the people believed it, and that the assignment of a great admiral—one of the two great heroes of the war—to such an unimportant post would confirm that belief. The President said that it was an important assignment and the only one that could be given."

"Then I advised Admiral Schley to go to Washington and accept the assignment."

So the President, who upholds and indorses the blundering and intrigues of General Otis, who keeps Captain Carter out of prison, who sheltered Alger and

Eagan until public opinion forced action, has sentenced Admiral Schley to serve on the South American station, while his rival and enemy, Admiral Sampson, who suppressed official dispatches and allowed a brother officer to bear undeserved blame, is to play the chief part in the reception of Admiral Dewey.

**The Hero's Just Reward Goes to His Rival.**

The hero of Santiago is to be sent to South America, where he will be helpless to defend himself when the great naval controversy comes up again in Congress, while Admiral Sampson, who was not only absent from the battle, but was guilty of withdrawing a powerful war ship from the blockading line to do what a torpedo boat could have done better, and so left the American naval force weakened in the fight, is placed in the forefront of power and glory.

"I am sorry that the Administration has not found it possible to confer adequate honors upon our great Maryland Admiral," said Governor Lowndes. "We believe him to be one of the greatest sea commanders in the world, a man of the noblest character, a hero and patriot worthy of the highest distinction. The people of Maryland feel the situation keenly."

This is the voice of all Maryland. But the President has yielded his ear to the whisperers, the moral assassins, the corridor conspirators.

What does it all mean? If there is anything against Admiral Schley but the fact that a recognition of his glory as the victor of Santiago will strip the false laurels from Admiral Sampson—who was

not present in the battle—why are the facts not given to the public? Why does the President continue to whisper hints about Admiral Schley's perfectly plain message that he could not coal in a turbulent sea from a disabled collier?

**Schley's Record Banishes All Suspicion.**

Admiral Schley has a record that forbids a suspicion of cowardice. His record in the civil war was magnificent. He commanded the squadron which rescued the Greely expedition on the Arctic coast. He not only was in command of the squadron which destroyed the Spanish fleet at Santiago, but his flagship, the Brooklyn, was in the front of the fight and was hit again and again—eight times oftener than any other ship in our squadron. And if you talk to any Spaniard who was in that swift race of death he will tell you that the Brooklyn and the Oregon were the two most terrible vessels on our side. The Spanish official reports show what Admiral Schley and the Brooklyn did to make our flag terrible to its enemies.

It is an inglorious, almost incredible situation in a country which shrinks with horror from anti-Dreyfusism in the French army. But look at it plainly. Whisper, whisper, tittle-tattle, stab, slander, intrigue, treachery—and all that the honor of winning the final and decisive naval battle of the war may be stolen from the real victor and given to an official favorite.

Only a few weeks ago an English admiral was asked what he thought of the conduct of the American squadron at Santiago.

"Well," he said, "I have never been able to understand why Admiral Sampson should be a candidate for honors in connection with that battle. He took the New York—in many respects your most powerful cruiser—out of the blockading line at a critical time to carry him to Siboney, seven miles away."

**Schley's Bravery Repaired Sampson's Blunder.**

"Schley had to fight and win the battle without the assistance of the speed and heavy battery of the New York. That was a great blunder on the part of Admiral Sampson. He had plenty of fast dispatch boats to carry him to Siboney. I think that any fair-minded naval board in the world would condemn him for taking an important ship out of the blockading line."

"It left Schley with a weakened force. It was a grave tactical mistake. I wonder that more has not been said about it."

**"Suppose the Spaniards at the first contact had sunk several of your ships, the loss of the New York from the squadron would have been a matter serious enough to have justified the trial of Sampson by court-martial."**

"I am not aware that Schley made any mistake in the battle. The result proved him to be a magnificent sea fighter."

Nevertheless, Admiral Schley is to go into exile. He has been accused in the corridors and corners, tried in the dark and sentenced by the President. He cannot speak. His official position prevents that. All he can do is to bow his head and wait.

JAMES CREELMAN.